

PN-4731 Winnipeg Free Press

W72

RBC

An illustrated pamphlet on the
Winnipeg Free Press from 1872-1900.

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1872

1900

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Free Press

WINNIPEG, CANADA.



PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

MANITOBA

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CLASSIFICATION

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INTRODUCTION



ACH issue of a modern newspaper of the first class is the product of the skilled labor of a great force of workers. Every day it springs forth fresh from the press and type machines and from the busy brains of an army of men and women who work in its service, near and far, making its columns a daily record of the news from every quarter of the earth. Telegraph wires and cables which stretch and vibrate across continents and under oceans annihilate distance in its service. It makes all current history and thought part of the daily life of the people. The average reader seldom, in all probability, gives more than a passing moment's thought to the method of its making. He has no very definite conception, it is perhaps fair to say, of the complexity of the process of "getting out" such a newspaper, and what it represents in expenditure of time, energy, thought and money.

No successful newspaper ever stands still. As it grows in importance and in influence, its mechanical growth and development and its facilities for reaching and serving a rapidly growing public must expand. The pages which follow will not be without interest in their picturing of the most modern developments of mechanical equipment for newspaper production, in the new home of the Manitoba Free Press, showing the evolution from that relic of the days of the infancy of the paper and of Winnipeg, the primitive hand-press that printed one side of one small page at each impression, to the complicated wonders of electrically-driven type-setting machines and the perfecting press making impressions from curved stereotype plates, upon endless rolls of paper, and capable of turning out 20,000 papers, printed, cut, pasted, folded and counted into lots of fifty in an hour—an evolution matching and keeping pace with the wonderful growth of the little Red River settlement of thirty years ago into the metropolis which to-day ranks third in its commercial standing among the cities of the Dominion, as the banking returns show, and which, as the distributing centre of a vast area that is rapidly filling with population, is destined to be the Chicago of Western Canada.



INFANCY



THE first issue of the *Manitoba Free Press* appeared on November 9, 1872. Two years had passed since the expedition under Colonel Wolseley, having made its way from the Canada of those days by the fur traders' route north to Lake Winnipeg and up the Red River, came at last in sight of Fort Garry, "standing on the level prairie, like a ship on the ocean, with its tall, bare flagstaff," as a survivor of the expedition describes it. Those two years following the bloodless capture of Fort Garry had brought the vanguard of the great Western movement into the fertile prairie country of the great Northwest, which had just been added to the Dominion, and which in these closing years of the century has been receiving an unprecedented and steadily increasing inflow of population, thousands of new farms being opened up every season, churches and schools being built, towns and villages growing, and agricultural and commercial prosperity becoming greater and more widespread, with Winnipeg as the hub and centre of it all. A record of the small beginnings from which Winnipeg began is preserved for the future historian of



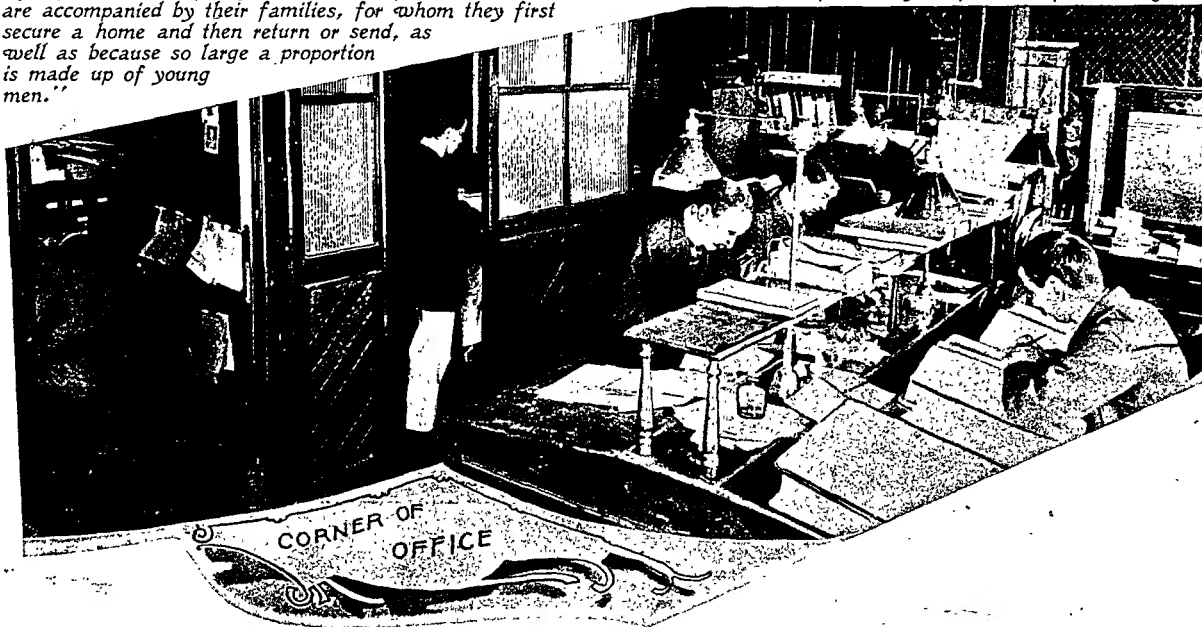
INFANCY

the West in the first issue of the Free Press, where he will find it stated:

"The population was three hundred in the fall of 1870; and we find it to have increased to seven hundred in the fall of 1871, or an addition of four hundred persons. This first day of November shows a population of fourteen hundred and sixty-seven."

It is interesting to read further on in the article:

"Of these fourteen hundred and sixty-seven, we find a thousand and nineteen males and four hundred and forty-eight females, a disparity noticeable at first in most western towns, and is here explained by the fact that few immigrants are accompanied by their families, for whom they first secure a home and then return or send, as well as because so large a proportion is made up of young men."



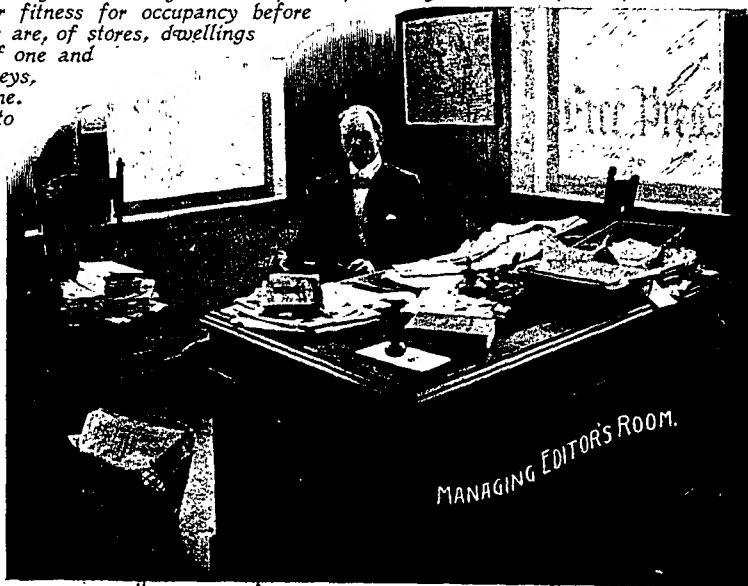
THE FIRST ISSUE

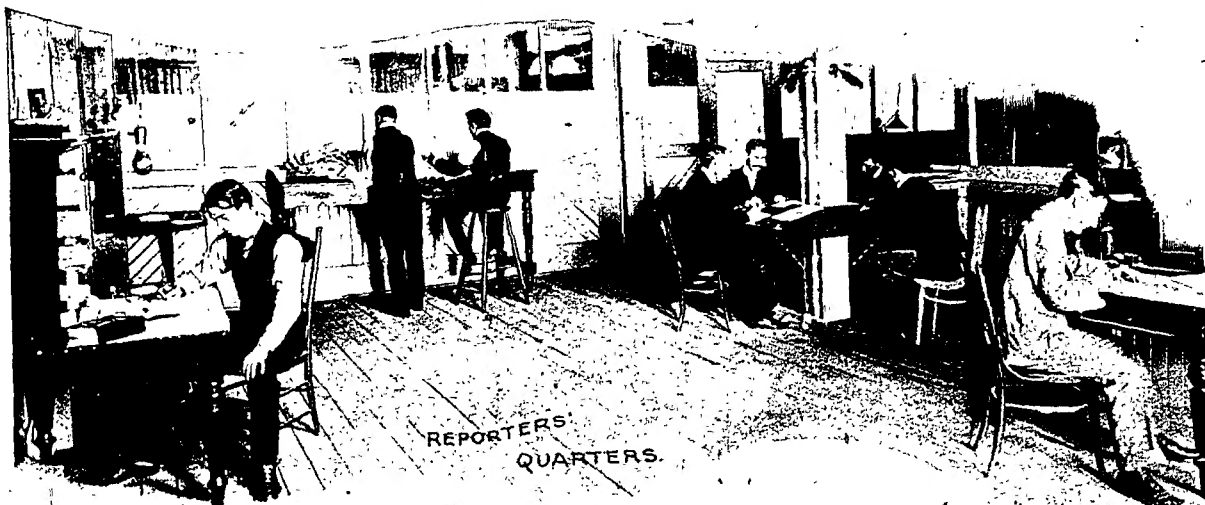
The article goes on to deal humorously with the demand at that time for young women, giving a number of instances of the eagerness of bachelor pioneers to become benedicts. Passing to the building operations of that time, we read:

"In taking the number of houses erected during the building season of the present year to the first of November, those so nearly completed as to ensure their fitness for occupancy before winter closes in were included, of which there are, of stores, dwellings and warehouses of one storey, thirty-four; of one and a-half storeys, thirty-three; of two storeys, fifty-six; and of two and a-half storeys, one. Total, one hundred and twenty-four—equal to the total number of buildings within the same limits one year ago."

"As regular mechanics are very scarce, farmers, laborers and greenhorns generally have to be crowded into the ranks, and employers are not apt to criticise too closely the finish of a joint or the smoothness of a surface of paint; which, though a disadvantage, of course, furnished profitable employment to many immigrants who arrived too late to work their claims this season."

But enough of lingering over the early days, though the Free Press may surely claim the early settler's privilege of garrulous reminiscence. It rocked the cradle of the infant city, and it has been from the first not the least of the influences which have shaped the development of the Northwest. It rendered the new





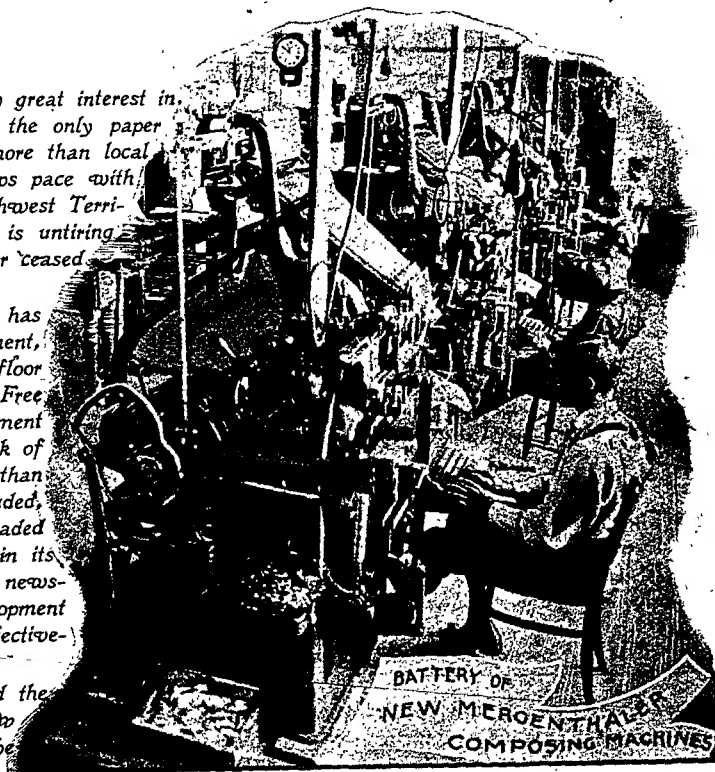
country the greatest service by inducing and encouraging immigration, copies of the Free Press being sent to the older settled communities and there read and circulated, with the result of attracting settlers to make their homes in the prairie land. The steady and solid growth of the paper's importance and influence was part of all the growth around it. Appearing only as a weekly during the first three years and a-half of its existence, the Free Press made its first appearance as a daily newspaper on July 6, 1874—an issue of four pages, smaller in size than the weekly. It has been issued continuously ever since as a daily, its weekly issue continuing also, of course, and semi-weekly and evening editions being added in the course of time. The Manitoba Free Press is to-day one of the oldest and best established newspapers in Canada. It is known particularly as the Great Western daily covering a territory extending from Port Arthur on Lake Superior to Vancouver on the Pacific Ocean. It enjoys the distinction of covering more territory in point of circulation than any other daily paper on the continent, and is found on the shores of Hudson's Bay and in the most remote

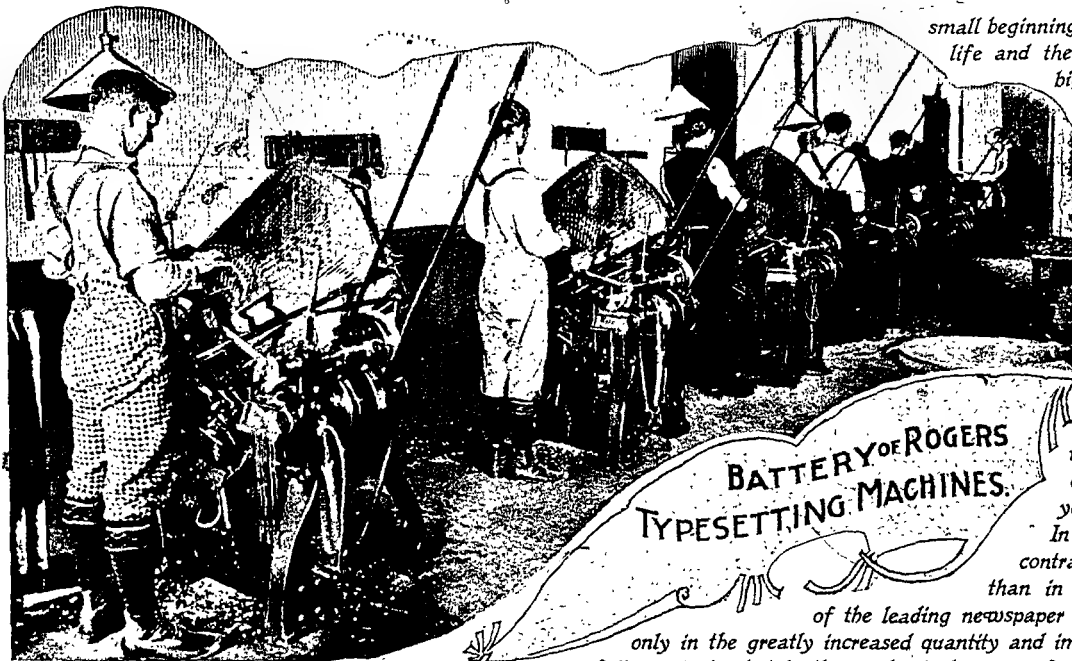
KEEPING PACE ❄

places of the great Canadian West. Taking very great interest in the subject of immigration, and being practically the only paper that is sent to friends abroad, it exercises a more than local influence. The prosperity of the Free Press keeps pace with the growth and population of Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia, whose resources it is untiring in advertising and whose development it has never ceased to promote.

In keeping with the growth of the newspaper has been the development of its job printing department, which is now so extensive as to occupy one floor entirely and part of another floor in the new Free Press building, and possesses an unequaled equipment for turning out every kind of printing. Its stock of type is no less remarkable for its great volume than for its variety, all the newest type-faces being included, while its array of presses, large and small, is headed by the magnificent new Miehle press, which is in its own field what the Hoe perfecting press is in the newspaper field, the most highly improved modern development of printing machinery, especially designed for effectiveness in the finest halftone work.

The contrast between the old hand press and the fast perfecting press on which the Free Press is now printed is symbolical of the contrasts between all the





**BATTERY OF ROGERS
TYPESETTING MACHINES.**

small beginnings of the pioneer life and their growth to the bigger and better things of the present. It is the contrast between the old Red River cart with its yoke of oxen and the railway train and electric car of to-day.

These contrasts run through all the phases of the developments of the last thirty years in the West.

In no field are the contrasts more striking than in the development of the leading newspaper of the West, not

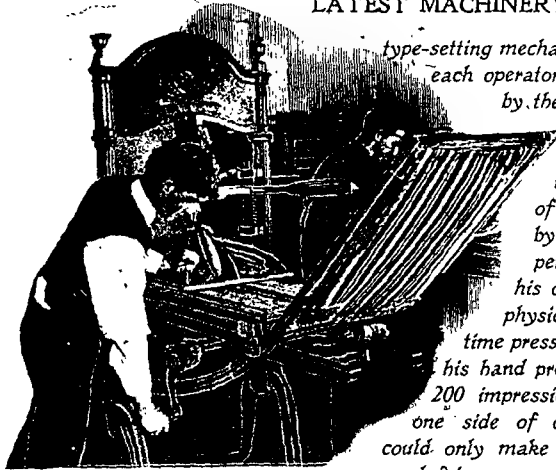
only in the greatly increased quantity and improved character of its contents, but in the mechanical means of producing it. The

Free Press was one of the first newspapers to substitute machinery for hand work in the setting of type, an equipment of Rogers machines having been in use in its composing room for a number of years past. When the Free Press moved

into its present new establishment; practically all the old plant was discarded, the Rogers machines being retained as an auxiliary force to the new equipment of Mergenthaler type-setting machines. In addition to the best newspaper quarters West of Toronto, the Free Press now has the best mechanical equipment made possible by all the latest improvements in printing machinery. A battery of four new Mergenthaler linotype machines has been installed in the composing room. These machines, in which



LATEST MACHINERY



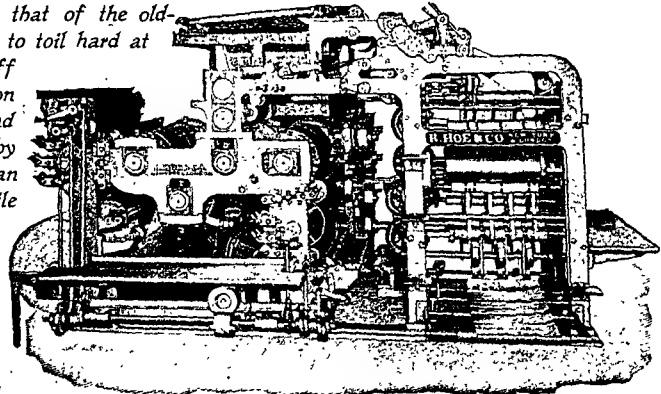
HAND PRESS
UPON WHICH FIRST FREE PRESS WAS PRINTED.

to and fro unceasingly, each page having to be separately "fed" in and separately printed in this laborious way, and the paper then folded by hand.

Such a wonder of mechanism as the fast perfecting press which now prints the Manitoba Free Press is, indeed, a speaking example of how modern scientific discovery, and

type-setting mechanism is carried to the highest point of effectiveness and perfection, enable each operator to set from four to five times as much matter as a compositor could set by the old hand method. The new superb Hoe perfecting press to which the stereotyping plant is an adjunct, is a greater marvel in its illustration of the vastly increased efficiency given to productive labor by modern invention and modern machinery. It can turn out 20,000 copies an hour of a complete Free Press, folded, pasted and ready for mailing. Driven by electrical power, it accomplishes this result of itself, with no more expenditure of muscular energy than is required of a locomotive engineer with his one hand on the steam throttle and the other on the lever—ininitely less physical labor than that of the old-time pressman who had to toil hard at

his hand press to work off 200 impressions an hour on one side of one sheet, and could only make such speed by having an assistant to run an ink-roller over the type while he worked the heavy lever



NEW HOE PERFECTING PRESS.

ELECTRICITY ✱

mechanical invention have gone hand in hand to clothe human effort with the power of producing results as unforeseen when the first issue of the paper was printed as it was that the old Red River trail, with its ox-carts laboring in the mud, would present to-day's commonplace sight of electric cars upon its asphalt surface. The energy which drives the press, instead of being furnished by human muscle, comes from electric motors, which run the elevator and furnish all the power required on each floor of the new Free Press building. And the part played by electricity in "getting out"



the paper is not confined to the furnishing of power and light within the four walls of the Free Press building. The Manitoba Free Press is the only newspaper between Toronto and the Pacific Coast which is a member of the Associated Press, that great news-gathering organization which girdles the globe, and in its daily achievement of supplying all the world's news to the newspapers which are of its membership, accomplishes the greatest realization of the value of the telegraph to modern civilization. The Associated Press covers all this continent with its agencies, and has able correspondents in all the capitals of Europe and in every quarter of the globe whose daily reports and forecasts of important events are transmitted to the Free Press. With its own special correspondents in the chief cities of Eastern Canada and throughout Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British

GREAT VARIETY

Columbia, the Free Press is thus enabled to place before its readers daily a current history of the world, as well as a complete record of the events and incidents of its own local field.

The composing room, for various reasons, is perhaps the most interesting section of the whole establishment. It is large, airy, admirably lighted, and its convenience of arrangement could attract the attention of even those who are not familiar with

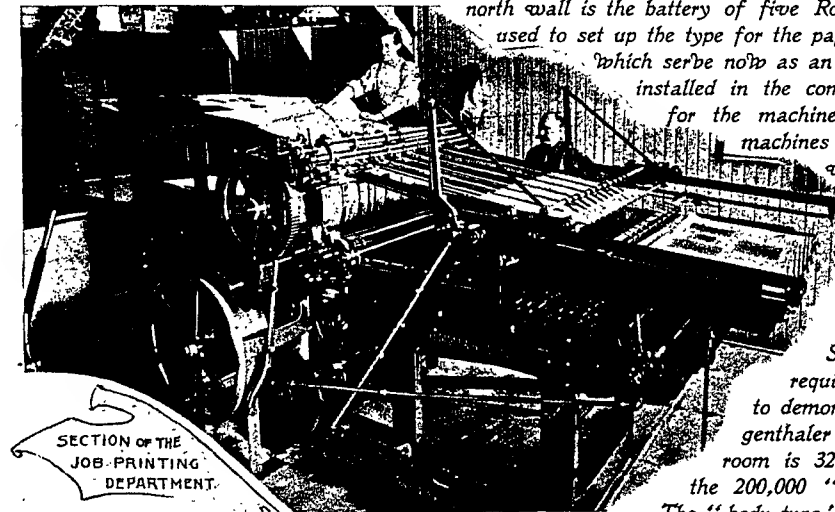
composing rooms as they are found in the best equipped modern newspaper offices. In this up-to-date room are, of course, to be seen printers' cases in due array, at which compositors set type by hand for the advertising columns of the Free Press. As a great variety of type is used in the advertisements, this work



COMPOSING ROOM

is still done by hand in this office, as in every other, type-machines for setting "display" or advertising type being wholly out of the question.

Along the west wall of the composing room is ranged the battery of four Mergenthaler linotype machines. Along the north wall is the battery of five Rogers type-setting machines, which were used to set up the type for the paper in the old Free Press building, and which serve now as an auxiliary force. Two electric motors, installed in the composing room, supply the power needed for the machines. The capacity of the Mergenthaler machines is 40,000 "ems" each for eight hours' work.



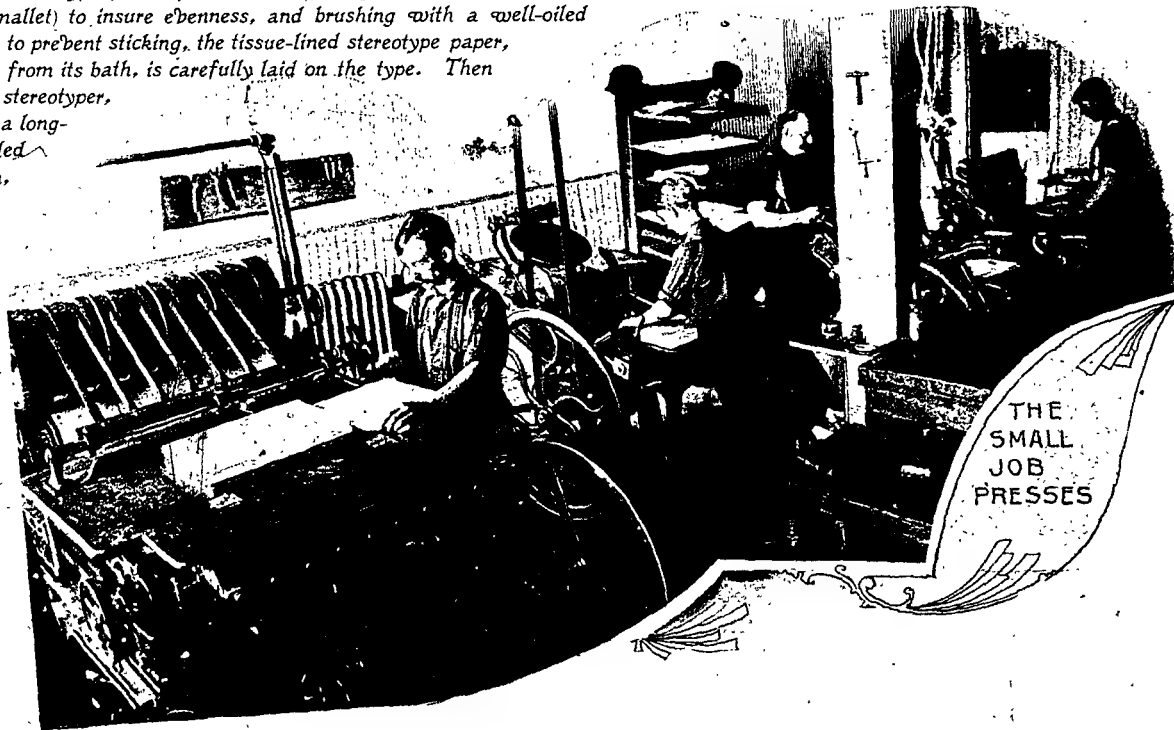
SECTION OF THE
JOB-PRINTING
DEPARTMENT

There are thirteen "ems" to the line in the Free Press columns, which are of standard measure. As the Mergenthaler machines work eight hours each day and eight hours each night—excepting, of course, the short, afternoon on Saturdays, and the rest on Saturday nights and on Sundays—it requires only a simple arithmetical operation to demonstrate that the daily work of the Mergenthaler battery in the Free Press composing room is 320,000 "ems," which is backed up by the 200,000 "ems" capacity of the Rogers battery. The "body type" of the paper, that is the type in which

the news is printed, is thus entirely machine-set. None of this machine-set type leaves the third-floor. It is not used to print from. It never sees the perfecting press down on the ground floor.

STEREOTYPING

The east half of the same floor on which the composing room is situated is devoted to the Stereotyping department, into which type forms from the composing room are rolled on adjustable tables. Here, after planing (pounding with a block and mallet) to insure evenness, and brushing with a well-oiled brush to prevent sticking, the tissue-lined stereotype paper, damp from its bath, is carefully laid on the type. Then the stereotyper, with a long-handled brush,



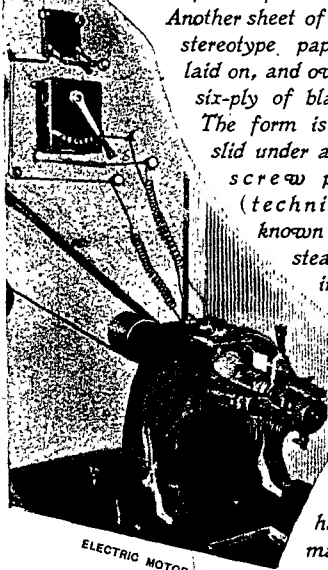
STEREOTYPING

begins to beat the creamy, pulpy mass into the form of type. At each dexterous stroke of the brush the matrix becomes more distinct. This operation completed, small squares of stiff cardboard are quickly distributed over every blank space larger than a quarter of an inch. Fine, white powder is next laid on very thickly, and again as carefully wiped off, leaving only what filled up the indentions.

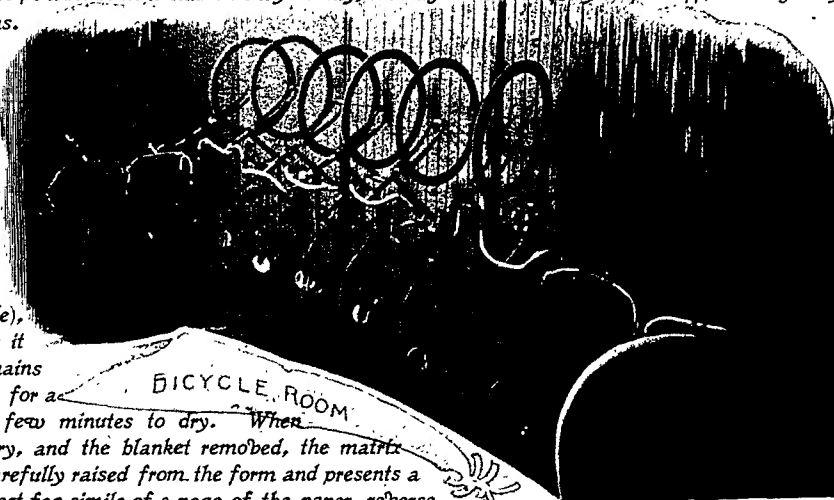
Another sheet of pulpy stereotype paper is laid on, and over all six-ply of blanket. The form is now slid under a great screw press (technically known as a steam drying table),

where it remains

for a few minutes to dry. When dry, and the blanket removed, the matrix is carefully raised from the form and presents a perfect fac-simile of a page of the paper, reverse side up, of course. The matrix is now deftly fitted into a queer cradle-like affair, not unlike a half-section of iron smoke-stack resting hollow side up upon a stout iron frame. When the matrix is in place, down comes a cover that fits the mould as one half of a lemon squeezer fits



ELECTRIC MOTOR.



STEREOTYPING *

the other. The touch of a handle raises the mould on end, disclosing an iron mouth. From an immense cauldron close by, holding nearly one ton of molten metal, two men bring a great ladle swinging on adjustable handles, by means of which they tip the hot metal down the mouth of the mould. In about four minutes the mould is lowered and the stereotype plate removed. Next it is placed on a cylinder-shaped machine, where a sharp knife cuts it to the required length. From this machine it goes to another, where, laid on its back, the inside of the plate is shaved until it is exactly type high. The last stage is the trimmer, where, on a cylinder-shaped frame, the plate is placed to have any defects removed by sharp chisel-like instruments in the hands of skilled workmen. The last plate is now placed on the elevator and dropped to the press room on the first floor. In the hands of skillful pressmen it is in a few moments on the press, a touch of the lever and papers are pouring out printed, counted, folded and pasted at the rate of 333 complete copies per minute.

